

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY BELGRADE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BERLIN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI PRIORITY

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USSALTTWO/CTB

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PARM, SOPN

SUBJECT: JUNE 7 ROUNDUP: PRESS ITEMS OF ARMS CONTROL

INTEREST

LONDON FOR AMB/EX, SOFIA FOR AMBASSADOR, HELSINKI FOR ASAT

1. U.S. AND SOVIET DELEGATIONS BEGIN TALKS IN HELSINKI

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JUNE 8 ON ANTI-SATELLITE SYSTEMS, BUT ACCORDING TO HENRY

BRADSHER OF WASHINGTON STAR, CARTER ADMINISTRATION "IS

STILL UNCLEAR ON ITS OWN ATTITUDE" TOWARD SUCH WEAPONS.

NOTING THAT HELSINKI TALKS ARE DESCRIBED AS EXPLORATORY,

BRADSHER SAID "ADMINISTRATION WANTS TO FIND OUT WHAT SOVIETS

ARE PREPARED TO CONSIDER--PARTLY AS GUIDE TO CLARIFYING ITS

OWN THINKING." SOVIETS HAVE BEEN TESTING ASATS SINCE 1967,

AND U.S. "HAD STUDIED ASAT POSSIBILITIES OFF AND ON FOR NUMBER OF YEARS WITHOUT MAKING SERIOUS EFFORT TO MAKE ITS OWN SPACE INTERCEPTORS," BRADSHER NOTED. "BUT INTEREST BEGAN WARMING UP AGAIN AFTER SOVIETS INTENSIFIED TESTING TWO YEARS AGO. NOW MANY OFFICIALS DO NOT WANT TO ENTER INTO ANY AGREEMENT THAT WOULD STOP TESTING OR IN ANY OTHER WAY HINDER THIS COUNTRY'S CATCHING UP." BRADSHER SAID U.S. HAS RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM UNDER WAY, BUT IT IS NUMBER OF YEARS FROM AN OPERATIONAL ASAT CAPABILITY. "IN ORDER TO LET THIS PROGRAM CONTINUE, U.S. DOES NOT AT THIS TIME INTEND TO SEEK IN ITS TALKS WITH SOVIETS BAN ON ASAT TESTING, ACCORDING TO INFORMED SOURCES. SEEKING SUCH BAN HAD BEEN ADVOCATED BY ARMS CONTROLLERS IN EARLY DISCUSSIONS LAST YEAR OF AMERICAN POSITION IN EVENTUAL NEGOTIATIONS, BUT IT WAS DEFEATED BY OPPOSITION FROM PENTAGON AND SOME OTHER GOVERNMENTAL BRANCHES. FINAL AMERICAN POSITION HAS NOT BEEN WORKED OUT, HOWEVER. SINCE HELSINKI MEETING WILL BE ONLY PRELIMINARY TO FORMAL NEGOTIATIONS, THERE IS STILL TIME FOR ARGUMENT WITHIN ADMINISTRATION." EMPHASIZING THAT IT IS UNCERTAIN THAT SOVIETS ARE PREPARED TO NEGOTIATE SERIOUSLY ON ANY MEANINGFUL RESTRICTIONS ON ASATS, BRADSHER SAID ADMINISTRATION "HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO FIGURE OUT HOW SUCH AN AGREEMENT WOULD BE VERIFIED."

2. WRITING IN WASHINGTON POST, SYNDICATED COLUMNISTS ROWLAND EVANS AND ROBERT NOVAK SAID BRZEZINSKI HAS EMERGED
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"AS CLEAR WINNER IN HIS FOREIGN POLICY STRUGGLE WITH STATE DEPARTMENT." AS RESULT, THEY SAID, ADMINISTRATION HAS ENDED "ITS HEADLONG RUSH" TO NEW SALT AGREEMENT AND STATE DEPARTMENT POLICY "PUTTING AFRICA OFF LIMITS TO SLIGHTEST SUGGESTION OF U.S. MILITARY INVOLVEMENT." THEY SAID "APART FROM PRESIDENT'S RHETORIC APPEASING ARMS CONTROL LOBBY, SALT SEEMS DESTINED FOR DEEP FREEZE UNTIL NOVEMBER ELECTION." SOME OFFICIALS, EVANS AND NOVAK SAID, HAVE PRESSED MEDIA COUNTERATTACK AGAINST NEW POLICY DESIGNED "TO CHALLENGE MOSCOW'S BOLDLY EXPANSIONIST MOOD." THEY SAID "PRINCIPAL SOURCE OF COUNTERATTACK AGAINST BRZEZINSKI IS ACDA," WHICH HAS BEEN "SOURCE OF WIDELY SCATTERED REPORTS COMPLAINING ABOUT NEW U.S. COOLNESS IN ARMS TALKS." EVANS AND NOVAK SAID SOME OFFICIALS PREVIOUSLY FAVORING CONCILIATORY POLICY TOWARD MOSCOW AND HANDS-OFF POLICY IN AFRICA "ARE NOT COUNTERATTACKING BUT ACCOMMODATING." THEY SAID CRITICAL COLLEAGUES REFER TO STATE'S POLICY PLANNING CHIEF TONY LAKE AND OTHERS AS "BORN AGAIN HAWKS." VANCE, ACCORDING TO EVANS AND NOVAK, TAKES POSITION THAT IF PRESIDENT WANTS TO PUT SALT IN MOTHBALLS AND WANTS AN ACTIVIST ANTI-SOVIET POLICY IN AFRICA, HE WILL GO ALONG. "ACCORDING TO WHITE HOUSE

AIDES, HE IS NOW MORE INVOLVED IN QUIETING REBELLION
AGAINST BRZEZINSKI THAN IN PUSHING VIEWS OF HIS OWN."

3. WILLIAM BEECHER OF BOSTON GLOBE DISCUSSED SOVIET PROPOSAL THAT BOTH SIDES FOREGO NEW ICBM THROUGH 1985, LIFE OF PROJECTED SALT TREATY. BEECHER SAID GROMYKO PROPOSAL, "WHEN COMBINED WITH OTHER ELEMENTS OF CURRENT SOVIET SALT STANCE, IS VIEWED BY TOP ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS AS HEAVY-HANDED ATTEMPT TO GAIN UNILATERAL ADVANTAGE." HE SAID SOVIETS ARE WELL AWARE OF U.S. ASSESSMENT THAT NO MATTER WHAT IS LIKELY TO EMERGE IN NEW SALT TREATY, AMERICAN MINUTEMAN FORCE WILL BECOME VULNERABLE TO SOVIET FIRST STRIKE IN EARLY 1980'S. "THAT'S FUNCTION OF INCREASED NUMBER OF MORE ACCURATE WARHEADS IN NEWEST ICBM'S NOW

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BEING DEPLOYED BY RUSSIANS." BEECHER SAID SOVIETS ALSO ARE WELL AWARE THAT ADMINISTRATION IS LOOKING TO MX MISSILE "AS POTENTIALLY BEST WAY TO OVERCOME THIS PROBLEM IN MID-1980'S....BUT IF U.S. BOUGHT GROMYKO DEAL, IT WOULD LOSE RIGHT TO TEST AND DEPLOY ONE MISSILE DESIGNED TO CORRECT GROWING TILT IN STRATEGIC BALANCE. ALL RUSSIANS WOULD FOREGO WOULD BE NEW SINGLE WARHEAD MISSILE THEY HAD BEEN PLANNING." BEECHER SAID SOME RANKING POLICYMAKERS ARE CONVINCED GROMYKO PROPOSAL ALSO WAS AIMED AT EXACERBATING INTERNAL BUREAUCRATIC DEBATE IN WASHINGTON. SOVIETS, HE SAID, KNOW SOME STATE AND ACDA OFFICIALS WOULD LIKE TO KILL MX, "BOTH BECAUSE ITS CONCEALMENT FEATURE MIGHT MAKE FUTURE SALT MISSILE-COUNTING MUCH HARDER AND BECAUSE BIGGER, MORE ACCURATE WARHEADS IT WOULD CARRY COULD DESTROY SOVIET MISSILE SILOS AND MAKE FOR HAIR-TRIGGER MOOD IN CRISIS." VANCE

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